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ABSTRACT

Existing literature on pronunciation instruction in English as a second language is reviewed, revealing that significant attention to the improvement of American English pronunciation among foreign students has been lacking. For the teacher's benefit, an analysis of basic phonetics is presented, laying a foundation for understanding pronunciation problems of foreigners. A model of nine lessons for teaching American phonemes is developed in detail, using one example (th), but applicable to all others. A multi-approach technique is used (audio-lingual, syntactic, contrastive analysis, articulatory, theatrical, visual aids), as well as useful games and special devices. The study emphasizes the great need for, and advantages of, increased attention to pronunciation improvement. (Author)

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# IMPROVING FOREIGNERS' PRONUNCIATION OF AMERICAN ENGLISH

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts (Teaching English as a Second Language), Hunter College, The City University of New York.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION . . . . . 1

II. EXPLORATION OF EXISTING LITERATURE . . . . . 5

III. DEFINITIONS, ANALYSIS, AND SPECIAL ASPECTS OF THE SPOKEN AMERICAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE . . . . . 14

A. What is Language?. . . . . 14

B. What is American English?. . . . . 15

C. What are English phonemes? . . . . . 16

1. Segmentals . . . . . 16

a. Consonants . . . . . 16

b. Vowels . . . . . 23

2. Suprasegmentals. . . . . 29

a. Stress . . . . . 29

b. Intonation . . . . . 35

c. Juncture . . . . . 37

D. What is Foreign Accent . . . . . 39

E. Causes of Foreign Accent in American English. . . . . 40

IV. DRILLS AND EXERCISES FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE /θ/ PHONEME WITH SUPRASEGMENTAL PHONEMES . . . 45

A. Audio-Lingual Approach . . . . . 46

B. Syntactic Approach . . . . . 47

C. Contrastive Analysis . . . . . 48

D. Articulatory Approach. . . . . 51

E. Theatrical Approach. . . . . 54

Chapter

V. GAMES AND DEVICES IN THE ESL INSTRUCTION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF AMERICAN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION. . . . . 58

A. Listening, Sound Discrimination, and Repetition . . . . . 58

B. Visual Aids. . . . . 69

C. Syntactic Approach . . . . . 76

VI. CONCLUSION . . . . . 78

APPENDIX . . . . . 82

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . . 85

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Clan needs, commercial interests, and the pleasure of social contact frequently demand that a person learn a second language. But when the language is mastered, the student will almost invariably find that he has a foreign accent. In severe cases, a breakdown in communication occurs, due to the speaker's unintelligibility or to the great need for concentration on the part of the listener, which will cause him to stop listening.

Throughout my teaching career, I have repeatedly heard student comments about their peers regarding complaints about foreign accent, e.g. "She has a fine vocabulary but is so hard to understand," "Will we ever speak without our accent?", "Please help us pronounce it better," etc. Many students do very well with reading comprehension, yet fail to understand the same words when orally delivered. Indeed, many become frustrated, neglected, or mocked, and finally, feel insecure and inferior.[1] The problem can even be severe enough to cause maladjustment. Once students feel thoroughly uncomfortable with their accents, they tend towards silence,

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[1]Fred M. Chreist, Foreign Accent (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964), Introduction B, p. xxx.

and there is thus a breakdown in the ability to communicate.

The fact is that foreign accent receives little systematic treatment in the traditional foreign language courses.[2] In my seven-year career of ESL teaching under Title VI and for Adult Basic Education, I have never encountered or heard of a systematic course in American pronunciation. Students typically learn grammar and vocabulary effectively, drilling the information by written and oral repetition. Yet, when pronunciation and accent problems occur, the teacher will usually stop briefly, offer some samples of good pronunciation, give some words of encouragement, and move on without further review. As a result, a good number of ESL students may move up from lower to higher levels only to find that they are not understood by new classmates or by the teacher, despite a good knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Observation of ESL courses in the elementary schools had also led me to the conclusion that there is no formal study of pronunciation there, and that this is a serious shortcoming which should be remedied.

The American University Language Center has provided intensive English training to thousands of students. While very few are mistaken for native Americans, due to special experimental efforts undertaken there, students have completed their education in the past two decades with significantly

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[2]Wilga M. Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 116.

better command of English pronunciation than ever before.[3] This indicates that special concentration on pronunciation can be successful and is therefore a most worthwhile pursuit.

For the past year, I have also dealt with pronunciation problems more intensively and structurally than ever before. The results have been gratifying. Students report to me that they conduct intelligible dialogues at interviews and parent-teacher meetings. They marvel at being able to detect English sounds they never before distinguished. It is therefore clear to me that strong efforts in proper pronunciation can be very rewarding.

Foreign accent is based on sound deficiencies, and they also have a physiological basis, e.g. variations in the position of the organs of speech, or in breath control.[4] To teach new sounds to foreigners effectively, knowledge of the subject and the methods must be quite comprehensive.[5] The goal of this study is to explain the basis for sound production, the application of many methods, the value of using games in teaching pronunciation, and to give a total approach to providing a varied, meaningful, and enjoyable procedure for improving English pronunciation.

Although learning American English requires the

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[3]Kenneth Croft, English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language (Washington D.C.: English Language Services, 1961), Foreword, p. i.

[4]Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 113.

[5]Mary Finocchiaro, Teaching English as a Second Language (New York: Harper and Row), p. 15.

acquisition of writing and reading skills, this study will emphasize mostly the oral ability, which is the most fundamental means of communication between members of a society. Writing and reading will be used as a means to facilitate and reinforce correct pronunciation. It would be unwise and unrealistic to seek to teach pronunciation entirely without resort to the other language disciplines of reading and writing. The view that only after oral language ability is attained should students be introduced to reading and writing[6] has been subjected to re-examination and adjustment.[7] Most ESL students already know how to read in their mother tongue and habitually look into texts and dictionaries. Therefore, to best meet their needs, desires, and habits, and to facilitate the transmission of better pronunciation, writing and reading will be included in the various exercises and lesson suggestions in this study.

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[6]Finocchiaro, Teaching English as a Second Language, p. 4.

[7]Edward G. Fichtner, "The Pronunciation of the English NG : A Case Study in Phoneme-Grapheme Relationships," Tesol Quarterly, 10:2 (June 1976): 193.

## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE

A review of the literature in the field of ESL instruction leads to the conclusion that writers and researchers have agreed to the following general observation: one who learns English as a second language can lose the "foreignism" in his speech, but only after a considerable period of observing and imitating the speech habits of a native speaker. With persistence, one can acquire these speech habits and master what is equivalent to native fluency.[1] Croft concludes that any person with normally functioning organs of speech and hearing has the potential ability and physical capacity to speak any language in the world without an accent.[2] Finocchiaro believes that the optimum age for most people to acquire a new language without an accent is before the age of ten or eleven, but that an adult can improve his pronunciation because of the several advantages he has over children, e.g. ability to accept special instructions for improving sound production, comprehension of the rationale for his

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[1]Kenneth Croft, A Practice Book on English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language (Washington D. C.: English Language Services, 1961), Teacher's Introduction, p. iii.

[2]Kenneth Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers (New York: Collier McMillan, 1968), p. 7.

difficulties, mature response, etc.[3] Croft feels that regardless of sex, age, or native background, any student can be trained to acquire good pronunciation provided there is the will to devote proper time and effort to the task.[4]

Stockwell points out that human beings are born with the inherent ability to produce an infinite number of sounds, but only a small fraction actually become meaningful and remain in use, e.g. those we use, hear, and repeat in our native tongue.[5] It is therefore only logical that with sufficient practice and training the other sounds can be learned just like the infant born to that language acquires them. Chreist believes that the student has to, and can, make a conscious effort to produce the unfamiliar sounds, acquiring the different motions of lips, tongue, and other speech organs so often until they become as automatic as those of the native speaker.

However, as Robinett points out, relatively little attention is paid to the aspect of language pronunciation. Teachers often underplay or ignore this most important element which is so vital for effective ESL teaching.[6] Croft and

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[3]Mary Finocchiaro and Michael Bonomo, The Foreign Language Learner: A Guide for Teachers (New York: Regents Publishing Company, 1973), p. 13.

[4]Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers, p. 10.

[5]Robert Stockwell and J. Robert Bowen, The Sounds of English and Spanish (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 3.

[6]Betty Wallace Robinett, Teaching English to Speakers Substance and Technique (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976), Introduction, p. xiii.

Rivers both pinpoint the especially neglected areas, e.g. syllabification, stress, intonation, and internal juncture.[7] Lado argues that undue stress on words and grammar to the neglect of pronunciation and oral ability is not in keeping with modern linguistic thinking.[8] Clarey and Dixson emphasize the fact that the teacher's knowledge and comprehension of the phonetics of English and how to teach it is every essential, for mere imitation drills are not very productive.[9] Croft states that a teacher's knowledge of phonology will help him recognize better unacceptable speech forms, and give him the basis to work for improvement.[10] Rivers reminds teachers that a systematic approach must be used by the professional teacher, not a hit and miss type of lesson.[11] She adds the thought, echoed by Gattegno, that the more varied the kinds of association the learner has with any material the more likely he is to learn it.[12] It therefore follows that many

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[7]Croft, A Practice Book on English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language, p. iii. Wilga M. Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 116.

[8]Robert Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures: Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971), p. 8.

[9]Elizabeth Clarey and Robert Dixson, Pronunciation Exercises in English Including Drills for the Correction of Faulty Accent and Intonation (New York: Regents Publishing Company, 1963), Preface, p. 7.

[10]Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers, p. 93.

[11]Rivers, Teaching Foreign Language Skills, p. 120.

[12]Caleb Gattegno, The Common Sense of Teaching Foreign Language (New York: Language Educational Solutions, 1976), p. 10.

approaches to pronunciation improvement should be used by the ESL teacher. It is also obvious that the method that works well with one student may be ineffective with another.

The first step to overcome pronunciation difficulties, according to Gordon, is to correctly identify the exact nature of the problem.[13] Since the most important sense used during the early period of language acquisition is ear training, this aspect should be viewed as the key element. While he agrees with this point, Croft points out that most people do not have the habit of listening critically to themselves.[14] As Clarey states, the learner usually concentrates on what he is saying, not on how he says it.[15] The best way to learn the art of hearing language is in a group class, by listening to others who are imperfect. Skill and experience gained in such situations will help students judge and correct their own errors. The audio-lingual approach encompasses the art of ear training. Gordon's drills and the texts of Trager[16] and of Wallace[17] are good sources for furthering ear training.

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[13]Morton J. Gordon, Speech Improvement (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1974), p. 13.

[14]Ibid., p. 50.

[15]Clarey and Dixson, Pronunciation Exercises in English Including Drills for the Correction of Faulty Accent and Intonation, p. 15.

[16]Edith Crowell Trager and Sara Cook Henderson, Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English (Rockville, Maryland: English Language Services, 1972).

[17]Betty J. Wallace, The Pronunciation of American English for Teachers of English as a Second Language with Practice Exercises (Ann Arbor: George Wahr Publishing Company, 1961), pp. 11-87.

Prator advises the use of tapes, by which the students hear their progress and feel gratified and encouraged. However, Croft does point out some of the limitations of using tape recordings alone: it lacks flexibility; it does not directly respond to the particular needs of the student; it cannot evaluate student performance or improvement; there is no personal touch.[18] But he agrees that it can be an excellent tool for reinforcement, practice, and review after sounds have been thoroughly studied and acquired in class.[19] Gray states that speech correction and alphabetical association should go together. In the long run, sounding is the simplest method for a child to unlock a word.

Gordon,[20] Trager,[21] and Dixson[22] all encourage the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), which provides a simple method to symbolize each and every sound in the language. It helps break up old speech habits by providing a new visual stimulus. As Prator notes, "It makes possible for the students' analytical faculties to intervene more effectively in the formation of sounds and patterns of

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[18]Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers, p. 58.

[19]William S. Gray, On Their Own in Reading (Chicago: Scott Foresman, 1948), p. 28.

[20]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 37.

[21]Trager and Henderson, Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English.

[22]Clarey and Dixson, Pronunciation Exercises in English Including Drills for the Correction of Faulty Accent and Intonation, p. 9.

sound. For the eye is more analytical than the ear."[23]

It is for this reason that many visual aids have been developed and used in the teaching of ESL pronunciation. Bronstein,[24] Finocchiaro,[25] and Nilsen and Nilsen[26] use diagrams and charts to show the places of articulation for vowels and for consonants. Gattegno uses a different color for each sound in his Fidels (his name for his charts).[27] Placing vowels on the top and consonants on the bottom, he uses different colors for every different sound. The student is made aware of both the sound and the color, for Gattegno feels that "we hold (retain) better what we meet with awareness and not by memorization."[28] Croft,[29] Trager,[30] Wallace,[31]

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[23]Clifford H. Prator, Manual of American English Pronunciation (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1956), p. 15.

[24]Arthur J. Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English: An Introduction to Phonetics (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1960), pp. 28-29, chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.

[25]Mary Finocchiaro, Teaching English as a Second Language (New York: Harper and Row), pp. 368-371.

[26]Don L. F. Nilsen and Allen Pace Nilsen, Pronunciation Contrasts in English (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1971), pp. 1-74.

[27]Gattegno, The Common Sense of Teaching Foreign Language, p. 47.

[28]Ibid., Preface, p. vii.

[29]Croft, A Practice Book on English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language.

[30]Trager and Henderson, Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English.

[31]Wallace, The Pronunciation of American English for Teachers of English as a Second Language with Practice Exercises.

and Lesh[32] use visual symbols such as dots, vertical and horizontal lines, and contours to show and teach intonation, stress, and juncture.

The articulatory approach emphasizes scientific explanations to the student for each phoneme. Among the supporters of this approach are Bronstein,[33] Stockwell,[34] Wallace,[35] and Allen, Allen, and Shute.[36] McCane and Prator encourage the syntactic approach, which gives the meaning to each word learned.

Chreist,[37] Lado,[38] and Stockwell[39] all suggest using the contrastive analysis approach, in which sounds of both languages are compared for similarities and differences. The results of such comparisons have proven to have fundamental value for the preparation of teaching material, tests, and language learning experiments.

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[33]Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English: An Introduction to Phonetics.

[34]Trager and Henderson, Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English.

[35]Wallace, The Pronunciation of American English for Teachers of English as a Second Language with Practice Exercises.

[36]Robert L. Allen, Virginia French Allen, and Margaret Shute, English Sounds and Their Spellings: A Handbook for Teachers and Students (New York: Thomas Crowell, 1966).

[37]Fred M. Chreist, Foreign Accent (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964), p. 32.

[38]Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures: Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers, Preface.

[39]Stockwell and Bowen, The Sounds of English and Spanish, Preface.

The theatrical approach, recommended by Herman and Herman, in which students become actors and actresses, often helps remove the inhibitions which prevent perfect pronunciation.[40] With this approach, the exaggeration of sounds is not only permitted, but it is advised, and helps students get to hear the sounds they previously might have been avoiding.

Many researchers have written on the subject of ESL instruction and concluded that games in the classroom are very effective and worthwhile. Duke points out that games are effective even with adults because the students are not placed in the traditional teacher-dominated milieu, and therefore respond favorably.[41]

Educators who have studied skill development methods agree that the best way to improve a skill is to practice frequently. According to Gordon, it is better to have five 20-minute sessions per week in ESL than two 50-minute ones.[42]

Gordon seems to be correct in his insistence that a multisensory approach will be most productive in learning to listen to our own speech, the first step necessary in learning a language and improving pronunciation. As Chreist states,

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[40]Lewis Herman and Margaret Shalet Herman, American Dialects: A Manual for Actors, Directors, and Workers (New York: Threatre Art Books, 1947), p. 18.

[41]R. D. Duke, Gaining Simulation in Urban Research (East Lansing, Michigan: State University Press, 1964), p. 40.

[42]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 11.

all language, native or acquired, is learned by auditory generalization and discrimination; thus, accurate listening skills will lead to accurate pronunciation skills.

This review of the literature confirms that it is a widely accepted theory that considerable improvement in pronunciation of acquired languages is quite possible, and is a goal worthy of concentrated pursuit.

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[43]Chreist, Foreign Accent, p. 35.

## CHAPTER III

## DEFINITIONS, ANALYSIS, AND SPECIAL ASPECTS OF AMERICAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

### What is Language?

Language is the phenomenon that permits humans to communicate with each other orally and/or in writing. At the same time, it mirrors the culture of the society and of the speakers who use it. Spoken language is universal, available to all normal members of the human race.

Language is one of the most rigidly constructed of all human activities. Only certain sounds, sound sequences, or word arrangements are acceptable in a particular language. The sound system and the meaningful arrangements of the sounds into words and utterances have to be acquired.[1] This system, called phonology, may be regarded as a set of rules which specify its pronunciation, just as grammatical rules specify the correct structures needed to form meaningful phrases and sentences.[2] The sounds are the smallest units with which the language operates, and by their combinations and manipulations,

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[1]Mary Finocchiaro and Michael Bonomo, The Foreign Language Learner: A Guide for Teachers (New York: Regents Publishing Company, 1973), p. 6.

[2]Robert P. Stockwell and J. Donald Bowen, The Sounds of English and Spanish (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 3.

language is produced and understood.[3]

What is American English?

Under the term American English, we include English as spoken in North and South America, Hawaii, and Alaska.[4] It is one of the dialects of the international English language. A dialect indicates certain unique features of pronunciation characteristic of an area, which are clearly recognizable. American English was previously categorized as having three major dialects: New England, Southern, and General American. Today we distinguish more varieties. By means of data gathered by field workers for the Linguistics Atlas of the United States and Canada, we now recognize seven regional dialects: Eastern, New England, New York City, Middle Atlantic, Western Pennsylvania, Southern, and General American.[5] They all vary significantly, with special unique features present, particularly in vowel pronunciation. General American, with a following of about 67% of the population, has been the most distinctly American manner of speaking.[6] Croft has suggested that students would do best to

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[3]Robert L. Politzer and Frieda Politzer, Teaching English as a Second Language (Stamford, Connecticut: Stamford University Press, 1972), p. 3.

[4]Fred M. Chreist, Foreign Accent (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964), Introduction B, p. xxxiii.

[5]Elizabeth Kerr and Ralph M. Aderman, Aspects of American English (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 2.

[6]Quoted from Elizabeth Kerr, Aspects of American English by Hans Kurath, "American Pronunciation" SPE Tract, no. XXX (New York: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 268.

select the American English spoken by announcers of national TV and radio stations.[7] Nevertheless, the environment around the learner, as well as the English spoken by his teacher, will also have profound influence on his eventual style of pronunciation.

What is a Phoneme?

American English has forty phonemes.[8] A phoneme is defined as the smallest segment of sound which makes for a difference of meaning. By itself, it has no meaning, but by contrasting it with another sound it will be perceived. The speaker must know how to perceive and produce these sounds. The native American, for example, distinguishes between a letter p and a letter b, as in pat and bat, which some foreigners cannot do. Thus, these sounds are distinctive phonemes of the English language. There are two types of phonemes--segmental and suprasegmental. Segmental phonemes are the sounds which we call vowels and consonants, and their allophanes.

1. The articulators--are the doers, e.g. the organs and parts of organs that move. The principal ones are: the lips; the tongue (three parts of the tongue are individually important, the tip, the middle, and the back); the soft palate; the lower edge of the front teeth; and the vocal cords.

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[7]Kenneth Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers (New York: Collier McMillan, 1968), p. 9.

[8]Betty Emett, Listening for Speech Sounds or Phonemes, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 12.

2. The points of articulation--any point where the articulators meet:

a) the lips (for sounds /b/ /p/ /m/ /w/ and /ʍ/. In American English the distinction between /w/ and /ʍ/ has been disappearing.

b) the lower edge of the upper front teeth with the lower lips (for sounds /f/ /v/)

c) the cutting edge of the upper and lower front teeth with the tip of the tongue (for /θ/ /ð/)

d) the gum ridge and tongue tip (for /t/ /d/ /s/ /z/ /n/ /l/ /r/)

e) the hard palate and the middle of the tongue (for /č/ /ǰ/ /š/ /ž/ /y/ /r/)

f) the soft palate and the back of the tongue (for /k/ /g/ /w/ /ʍ/ /ŋ/)

g) the glottis (for the sound /h/).

3. The manner of articulation--the two types of articulation are: the one in which the airflow is stopped momentarily, called stops or plosives (as for /p/ /b/ etc.), and the one in which airflow is constricted, called continuants. We distinguish four types of continuants:

a) those produced with friction called spirants or fricatives, including two variations:

(1) slit fricatives--in which the air column is squeezed through a slit opening fairly broadly from side to side but narrowly from top to bottom, e.g. /f/ /v/ etc.

(2) groove fricatives--in which the air column is squeezed through a more or less rounded opening formed by a trough in the tongue, e.g. /s/ /z/ etc.

b) lateral continuants, in which the air is forced around one or both sides of the tongue (/l/)

c) nasal continuants, when the air is closed off in the mouth and allowed to pass through the nose, e.g. /m/ and /n/

d) retroflex continuants, where the air is forced over and around a lump in the tongue (/r/)

e) glide continuants, for which the tongue modifies the escaping air when moving from one position to another. The consonant sound becomes clear when the vowel is pronounced, e.g. /r/ /w/ /ʍ/ /y̆/

Some of the consonants combine a stop with a fricative and are classified as affricates.

The onset is a stop but the release is a fricative, e.g. /c̆/, which is /t/ plus /s̆/.

4. <u>The variability of vocal production</u>--two types of vocal production are distinguished:

a) the vocal cords vibrate during articulation ("voiced"), including fourteen consonants, or consonant sounds: /b/ /d/ /y̆/ /g/ /v/ /z/ /m/ /n/ /l/ /y/ /w/ /ð/ /r/ /ŋ/

b) the vocal cords are not used ("voiceless"), including nine consonants: /p/ /t/ /c̆/ /k/ /f/ /θ/

/s/ /š/ /h/

Voiced and voiceless consonants can be paired: /b/ and /p/; /d/ and /t/; /g/ and /k/; /v/ and /f/); etc.

Another aspect of articulation is the element of force. If muscular tension and a substantial measure of lung pressure is used, the sound is said to be fortes, e.g. /f/ /k/ etc. If the muscular tension and lung pressure are relatively relaxed, the sound is called lenis, e.g. /v/ /g/ etc. It is generally true that voiced consonants are lenis and the voiceless are fortes.

The chart that follows will show and review the four factors described:

20 THE CONSONANT CHART

| Place of Articulation | Manner of Articulation: STOPS Voiceless | STOPS Voiced | NASALS Voiced | FRICATIVES Voiceless | FRICATIVES Voiced | AFFRICATES Voiceless | AFFRICATES Voiced | LATERAL Voiced | GLIDES Voiceless | GLIDES Voiced |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Both Lips | /p/ pin | /b/ bin | /m/ may | | | | | | | |
| Lip & Teeth | | | | /f/ fine | /v/ vine | | | | | |
| Tongue & Teeth | | | | /θ/ thin | / / this | | | | | |
| Tongue & Upper Gumridge | /t/ to | /d/ do | /n/ no | /s/ so | /z/ zoo | | | /l/ let | | |
| Tongue, Upper Gumridge and Hard Palate | | | | /š/ she | /ž/ measure | /č/ chin | /j/ joke | | /r/ red | |
| Tongue and Hard Palate | | | | | | | | | /y/ you | |
| Tongue and Soft Palate | /k/ came | /g/ gave | / / sing | | | | | | /w/ wet | /ʍ/ why |
| Glottis | | | | /h/ hat | | | | | | |

Based on Gordon.

All consonant sounds which cause pronunciation difficulties will be described fully elsewhere in this study and exercises for pronunciation improvement will be given, based on various approaches and techniques.

In addition to their use as single sounds, certain consonants combine with others, forming what are called clusters. They may appear at the beginning, middle, or end of a word, e.g. traitor, atlas, self. A cluster such as sl can be discussed either as an s cluster or as an l cluster, or as both. For the purposes of this discussion, all clusters will be noted, but repetitions will be avoided.

1. The /l/ cluster:
   a) at the beginning of a word we find /bl/ /kl/ /fl/ /gl/ /pl/ /sl/ /spl/, as in blue, clue, fly, glue, plea, sly, split;
   b) at the end of a word we find /ld/ /lf/ /lm/ /lt/ /lθ/ /lč/, as in old, self, milk, film, felt, health, belch;
2. The /r/ cluster:
   a) at the beginning of a word: /br/ /dr/ /fr/ /gr/ /kr/ /pr/ /tr/ /θr/, as in brat, dry, fry, gray, cry, prod, tree, three;
   b) at the end of a word: /rb/ /rd/ /rk/ /rm/ /rn/ /rf/ /rg/ /rl/ /rp/ /rv/ /rt/ /rč/ /rz/ /rθ/ /rð/, as in herb, hard, fork, harm, born, serf, target, hurl, harp, serve, art, arch, large, earth, northern;

3. The /s/ cluster:

   a) at the beginning of a word: /sk/ /sw/ /st/ /sm/ /sn/ /sp/ /skw/ /spr/ /str/ /skr/, as in school, sweet, stir, smart, snow, spot, square, spray, strike, scream;

   b) at the end of a word: /st/ /ts/ /ns/ /sk/ /ps/ /ks/ /kst/, as in fist, its, once, ask, rips, packs, next;

4. The /w/ cluster: starts the word with /kw/ or /tw/, as in quick, twin;

5. The /m/ cluster: ends words with /mp/, as in camp;

6. The /n/ cluster: ends words with /nd/ /nt/ /nč/ /ndz/ /nθ/, as in end, ant, inch, orange, tenth;

7. The /t/ cluster: words that end in /pt/ /ft/ /kt/, as in inept, soft, act;

8. The /ŋ/ cluster: words ending in /ŋθ/ and /ŋk/, as in length, blink.

The suffix "s" forms additional clusters, not enumerated above. Its pronunciation is determined by the final sound of the word with the suffix deleted. Whenever the final sound is voiceless (except for s, c, and s), the suffix is pronounced /s/, e.g. /ks/ (asks), /ps/ (lips), /ts/ (hits), /fs/ (life's), /θs/ (booths); but if the final sound is voiced, the suffix is pronounced /z/, e.g. /bz/ (cabs), /dz/ (heads), /gz/ (eggs), /vz/ (leaves), /mz/ (names), /lz/ (fools), /nz/ (rains), /rz/ (chairs), /ŋz/ (kings), /ðz/ (baths).

The ed suffix also creates additional clusters of

consonants. The pronunciation of ed is determined by the final sound of the word without the suffix. Words ending in a voiceless sound (except for t) will have the suffix ed pronounced as a /t/, e.g. after /f/ (laughed /laft/), /p/ (hopped), /k/ (talked), /s/ (passed), /š/ (wished), and /č/ (watched); but when the final sound is voiced, this suffix is pronounced /d/, as in /b/ (robbed), /g/ (begged), /v/ (loved), /m/ (seemed), /n/ (rained), /l/ (killed), /r/ (appeared), /z/ (advised), /ž/ (engaged), /ð/ (bathed), /ŋ/ (hanged). The complete list of all consonant clusters can be found neatly organized in the literature.[9]

What is a vowel?

Vowels are phonemes produced without air blockage by any articulators. They are created by tongue position on both vertical and horizontal axes, each position having a characteristic sound quality.[10]

On the vertical axis, we distinguish three vowel types: a high vowel, when the tongue is close to the palate; a mid vowel, when the tongue is halfway down in the mouth; a low vowel, when the tongue is low in the mouth.

Similarly, three horizontal positions are noted, from

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[9]Edith Crowell Trager and Sara Cook Henderson, Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English (Rockville, Maryland: English Language Services, 1972).
Morton Gordon, Speech Improvement (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1974).

[10]James S. Holton, R. L. Hadlik, and M. Montes, A Drill of Spanish Pronunciation (University of Hawaii: Harper and Row, 1968), pp. 3-4.

front to back: the front position, when the tongue is close to the alveolar ridge; the central position, when the tongue is in the center of the oral cavity; the back position, when the tongue is close to the velum.

There are two types of vowels in the English language:

A. English Simple Vowels

Simple vowels, or monophthongs, are those vowel sounds made while the tongue remains in a single position throughout the sound production.[11] There are seven simple vowels occurring in English syllables with strong or medial stress. Many allophonic variations can be detected in different dialects of English:

1. /ɪ/, as in bid--a front high vowel
2. /ɛ/, as in bed--a front middle vowel
3. /æ/, as in bad--a front low vowel
4. /ʊ/, as in put--a back high vowel
5. /ʌ/, as in but--a back central vowel
6. /ɔ/, as in law--a back lower central vowel
7. /ɑ/, as in pot--a central low vowel

The vowel /ʌ/ has its counterpart in the vowel /ə/ when unstressed, although /ə/ is slightly more centralized.

B. English Complex Vowels

To the seven simple vowels, American English adds the following four additional complex vowels, e.g. vowels which are formed by a slight movement of the tongue to a

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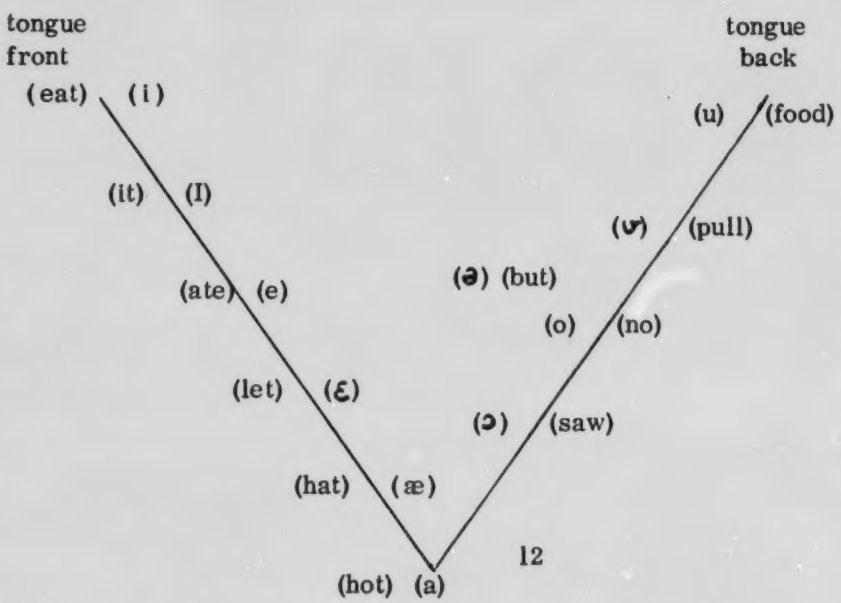
[11]Politzer and Politzer, Teaching English as a Second Language, p. 3.

higher position than from the starting point:

1. /i/, as in sea--moving from front high to front higher
2. /e/, as in say--moving from middle front to high front
3. /u/, as in sue--moving from back high to back higher
4. /o/, as in so--moving from back central to back high

The vowel triangle will give us a clearer picture and understanding of the above description:

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[12]Mary Finocchiaro, Teaching English as a Second Language (New York: Harper and Row), p. 368.

C. Various Other Vowel Characteristics

1. In addition to tongue position, shaping of the lips can be utilized to affect vowel sounds. The lips are spread for /i/ and for all front vowels. They are rounded for /u/ and for the back vowels. For central vowels they are neither rounded nor spread.

2. The degree of tenseness of the lips and the tongue muscles during English vowel production creates further variations. The higher vowels /i/, /e/, /u/, /o/, are more tense than the correspondent lower vowels /ɪ/, /ɛ/, /ʊ/, /ɔ/. This can be experienced when saying words like beat--bit, bait--bet, in rapid succession.

3. Vowels may be nasalized if sound escapes through the nasal cavity. English speakers nasalize vowels which come before or after nasal consonants such as n, in words like man, down, none, etc.

4. The length of the English vowels varies. It depends on whether they are syllable final or are followed by a voiced or unvoiced consonant in the same syllable. Thus, the vowel sound in the word be is held longer than in bead, which is in turn longer than in beat. They are also longer when accepted.

5. Pitch and intensity of English vowels varies. Intensity marks stress, which causes prominence of one syllable over another in a word. This prominence is brought out by the loudness of the vowel which makes it slightly longer. Stress is a phonemic variation as it distinguishes one word

from another, giving them different meanings, simple by stress shift, e.g. present vs. present.[13] Many stressed English monophthongs become diphthongs, or complex vowels, when they are stressed, e.g. the stress causes the tongue and/or jaw positions to change, e.g. the difference between no! to when it is part of no longer.

6. In English, there is only one basic vowel sound found in unstressed syllables, namely /ə/, or schwa. It is pronounced in the central position of the mouth and is extremely short in duration. This is why it is called a reduced vowel, as in about, select, or connect, which all have the same pronunciation. The vowels /æ/ and /ɛ/ will be neutralized before /r/; therefore, Mary and marry sound the same. The vowels /æ/, /ɛ/, and /o/, when unstressed are neutralized into a schwa. Sometimes barred /ɨ/ = /ɨ̈/ might be used for /ə/.

7. Vowel Distinction--All vowels can occur in accented syllables. The lower case vowels /ɪ/, /ɛ/, /æ/, and /ʊ/ can only occur if followed by a consonant or a glide, but never as final elements. These vowels are usually neutralized or reduced unless followed by another vowel, in which case the vowel contrast is maintained and neutralization avoided. For example, react is /rɪ æKt/, and biology is /baɪalədʒy/.

English Diphthongs

The English simple vowels can be combined with y or w to form complex nuclei. These are called post-vocalic glides,

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[13]Holton, Hadlik, and Montes, A Drill of Spanish Pronunciation, p. 76.

because the last element of the diphthong is a variant of /y/ as in yes, and /w/ as in water. They include:

/aɪ/ e.g. sight, bite

/ɔɪ/ e.g. boys, loin

/aw/ e.g. bout, down

The four complex vowels listed earlier in this study as the English complex vowels can be considered as diphthongs too, because the tongue and jaw move while they are in production. Nevertheless, for the three diphthongs above, the movement is greater and more noticeable. Since by definition, a diphthong is a sound produced when the tongue changes position while the sound is being produced, resulting in a two-vowels-merged-into-one effect, we thus note that there are three full diphthongs and four weaker ones.

The four simple vowels /ɪ/, /ɛ/, /a/, and /ʊ/, when followed by a y or w are somewhat higher than when they stand alone. The sound /ʌ/ is farther back and more fully rounded at the lips.

In English there are vocalic glides which cause the lengthening of the vowel, and is a variant of the phoneme /h/. This variant is present in the vowel /ɔ/, e.g. law, and in vowels that are followed by /r/, e.g. poor (/puhr/), far (/fahr/), etc.

In American English there are seventeen prevalent syllabic nuclei. Although different dialects may have widely different vowel systems, they may have vowel nuclei in addition to the seventeen mentioned above, particularly among the complex

nuclei.

What are allophones?

Allophones are phonemes which may be pronounced with some variations between one speaker and another, or even by the same speaker in repeated usage. These variations do not produce differences in meaning. Some deviations are predictable and follow distinct patterns, e.g. the p in the word pill as compared to the word spill, wherein we find that while the first is slightly aspirated, the latter is unaspirated. The native speaker will not hear the audible difference between many allophones which the foreigner may often distinguish easily.

Suprasegmental Phonemes

There are three suprasegmental phonemes, e.g. sounds or lack of sounds that produce meanings. They are stress (language rhythm), intonation (speech melody), and internal juncture (breaks and pauses).[14]

Stress

Stress refers to the force of articulation or accent given to part of a word, an entire word, or a phrase, by which special emphasis is placed affecting the meaning or intent of the speaker.[15] Stress may be compared to drum beats

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[14]Kenneth Croft, English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language (Washington, D. C.: English Language Services, 1961), Teacher's Introduction, p. ii.

[15]Finocchiaro and Bonomo, The Foreign Language Learner: A Guide for Teachers, p. 48.

of varying degrees of intensity, ranging from very loud to very soft, but the tone remains constant since the same drum is being used.[16] Stress is separate from melody pitch, although the two usually occur simultaneously. For analytical purposes, the two topics will be discussed individually. The English language is viewed as possessing four levels of stress: primary (ˊ or •) secondary (ˏ or •) tertiary (^ ~ •) and weak (∪ ~ •).[17] However, the current dictionaries use a three-step system, by eliminating the tertiary level, with a much larger interval utilized in this gradation method.[18] This system is easier for students, and a three-level differentiation is sufficient to point out to them the relative indifferences. Hence, for our purposes, this method has been adopted here.

Generally speaking, nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, interrogative, and demonstrative words carry the stress in thought groups and phrases. They are the content words. The unstressed words are articles, prepositions, personal pronouns, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs.[19]

Rules for Stress

1. When one-syllable words are pronounced alone, we

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[16]Croft, English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language, Teacher's Introduction, p. ii.

[17]A. J. Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English: An Introduction to Phonetics (New York: Appleton Century Crofts, 1960), p. 247.

[18]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 389.

[19]Ibid.

always give them primary stress.[20]

2. In words of two syllables, only one receives primary stress, sometimes the first syllable and sometimes the second, e.g. mórning, betwéen.

3. Changing the stress in a bi-syllable word can change its meaning, e.g. óbject and objéct. In these cases, first-syllable stress is used for nouns, the other for verbs.[21]

4. Compound words are stressed most often in the first syllable, e.g. báseball, shípshape.[22]

5. Change of stress in compounds will change the meaning, e.g. the híghchair is a compound noun with accent on the first syllable, while a hígh cháir is a two-word description, adjective-noun, with two primary stresses.

6. Some compound words may contain two primary stresses, e.g. hánd-máde.

7. When two stressed vowels come together, an open transition occurs so that it does not sound like one long sound, e.g. my own, aorta. /maɪ+oʊn/ /e+ɔɚta/

8. The usual stress in a word may be shifted to produce a special contrast or effect, e.g. I am fourteen, not fífteen.

Sentence stress is what characterizes the rhythm of American English. For example, the sentence "The mán on the córner is my friend" can be represented graphically (with

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[20]Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English: An Introduction to Phonetics, p. 257.

[21]Ibid., p. 256.

[22]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 380.

dashes for unstressed syllables and diagonal lines for stress) as follows: _ / _ _ / _ _ _ /, with one, two, and three unstressed syllables preceding the three stressed ones. Despite the difference in number of unstressed syllables, the English speaker will maintain the same rhythm through the sentence, the intervals of time between his three primary stresses remaining about the same. To do so, his final three unstressed syllables are pronounced so swiftly as to match in time the first unstressed syllable in the sentence. This style of speech also calls for crushing weak vowels, to /ə/, while the stressed vowels are held longer. Thus, English rhythm is phrase-timed rather than syllable-timed.[23]

Shifts in sentence stress will produce different intended meanings,[24] e.g. "He is going to the bank this afternoon" has a different intention than "He is going to the bank this afternoon," both of which are different than "He is going to the bank this afternoon." Although it is conceivable to teach accent and stress rules, the ultimate key to mastery of these techniques for foreigners is an emphasis on concentration on meaning and intention.

Intonation

Intonation, or speech melody, is the rise and fall

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[23]Robert Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures: Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971), p. 32.

[24]Chreist, Foreign Accent, p. 63.

of the voice pitch while pronouncing thoughts or sentences.[25] In a sense, it is like playing notes going up and down a scale. The notes produced during speech are called pitch levels, tone levels, or intonation levels. Although stress and pitch changes occur simultaneously, they do not always coincide. For example, in the phrase "Are you going by taxi?"[26] the primary stress is typically on the first syllable of taxi, yet the syllable following would usually have the highest pitch.

English has four pitch phonemes. Pike uses numbers to represent these phonemes, with one representing the highest, and four for the lowest, pitch.[27] Trager acknowledges these four levels, but reverses the number system, with four used for the highest pitch.[28] In this study, Trager's system has been adopted.

The four aforementioned levels are not fixed points on a musical scale, but rather four relative levels. The amplitude changes from speaker to speaker, and from situation to situation, e.g. a woman will usually speak at a higher

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[25]Betty J. Wallace, The Pronunciation of American English for Teachers of English as a Second Language with Practice Exercises (Ann Arbor: George Wash Publishing Company, 1961), p. 6.

[26]Sentences taken from Croft, English Stress and Intonation for Students of English as a Second Language.

[27]Kenneth Pike, The Intonation of American English (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1945), pp. 20-43.

[28]George L. Trager and Henry Smith, An Outline of English Structure (Norma, Oklahoma: Bellenburg Press, 1951).

pitch level than a typical man, just as an unusual situation might cause a raising of pitch level.[29]

The Four Pitch Levels

1. Pitch level /1/ is the low (lowest) level of speech, approximately two or three notes below the speaker's average speech. It is used for unstressed syllables or unaccented syllables at the end of an utterance.

2. Pitch level /2/ represents the habitual pitch level, and serves as the basis of comparison for the other three levels.

3. Pitch level /3/ is approximately two or three notes higher than level 2. This pitch usually, but not always, coincides with the syllable that carries the primary stress.

4. Pitch level /4/ is approximately two or three notes higher, and occasionally even more, than level 3. It is reserved for very special emphasis of emotion, whether anger, surprise, delight, or sorrow.

There are two types of inflectional movement for registering pitch changes:

1. Inflection between syllables or a word, or between one word and another. In such cases there is a pause immediately before the inflection, e.g. pen⌋cil, or "Give me that green pen⌋cil."

2. Inflection that occurs in the middle of a syllable, through the vowel, for which there is no pause, but rather a

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[29]Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures: Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers, p. 37.

glide movement, a continuous sound, through the vowel or diphthong, e.g. "This fruit is fresh," with the e in fresh changing pitch and sounding like two syllables.[30]

Intonation Patterns

1. The common (2-3-1) falling intonation may be used for:
   a) a simple factual statement, e.g.
      (2) I am a (3) tea (1) cher;
   b) interrogative questions, e.g.
      (2) What (3) time (1) is it?
   c) commands, e.g. (2) Come (3) here (1) child;
   d) separating two closely related ideas, e.g.
      (2) Don't drive so (3-1) fast, (2) it's (3) dan- (1) gerous.[31]

Level 3 does not necessarily appear near the end of a sentence or thought. The rise to this level may occur at various points of a thought group depending on the meaning or emphasis one wishes to impart. For example: (I don't mind how fast you talk but) (2) Don't (3) eat (1) so fast vs. (Please enjoy your food) but (2) Don't eat so (3-1) fast.[32]

2. The (3-1) falling intonation is used for:
   a) emphasis, e.g. (I see you don't like math)
      "I (3) do (1) like math."[33]

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[30]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 406.

[31]Ibid., p. 407.

[32]Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English: An Introduction to Phonetics, p. 272.

[33]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 408.

b) single syllable responses, e.g. (Are you happy?)

(3-1) Yes.[34]

3. The (2-3) rising intonation occurs

a) in the stressed words of a series,[35] e.g.

I need (2) pa (3) per, (2) pen (3) cils, (2) cot (3) ton, and . . .

b) in phrases connected by and, or, and but, e.g.

(2) I like (3) pears (2) and (3) grapes (2) and . . .

c) at the final syllable of questions with unstressed words, e.g. (2) Are you coming tomor (3) row?

d) for special emphasis as in repition, e.g.

(2) Do I like (3) what? I said do you like (3) apples?

4. The (2-4-1) pattern is utilized for exaggeration, surprise, etc., e.g. (2) Let go of my (4) an (1) kle!, (2) Is this gift for (4-1) me?[36]

There are other variations and combinations of pitch patterns in American English. However, the patterns reviewed above are the most common, and the ability to recognize and use them in their respective situations is quite sufficient for accurate production of American intonation.

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[34]Elizabeth Clarey and Robert Dixson, Pronunciation Exercises in English Including Drills for the Correction of Faulty Accent and Intonation (New York: Regents Publishing Company, 1963), Preface, p. 15.

[35]Gordon, Speech Improvement, p. 409.

[36]Wallace, The Pronunciation of American English for Teachers of English as a Second Language with Practice Exercises, Introduction, p. 10.

Internal Juncture

Juncture, or pauses, are "the punctuation marks of speech."[37] They divide utterances into meaningful units, or highlight a stress or intonation pattern emphasized by the speaker. Pauses exist within a word, between words, and at the end of phrases, in which case they are called terminal junctures. Pauses may be short or long, but the short ones will not utilize a punctuation mark like the long ones do. We may indicate long pauses with two lines, and short ones with a single diagonal, e.g. Don't go/./ You said you would talk to me/and I have some time now. The regular intervals created by pauses results in language rhythm, which combined with word stresses and intonation patterns produces the rhythm of American English.

Types of Pauses

1. Within words--Two strong stresses are separated by a pause, e.g. arch/bishop, ping/pong;
2. Between words
   a) Two stressed words are separated by a pause, e.g. ice-/cream, etc.[38]
   b) Words are recognized by the transition of the juncture, e.g. distinguishing between "a nice man" and "an ice man."

There is a close relationship between stress juncture

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[37]Chreist, Foreign Accent, p. 74.

[38]Bronstein, The Pronunciation of American English: An Introduction to Phonetics, p. 250.

and phonetic change, e.g. the pronunciation of the /t/ in "not at all" differs from the /t/ in "a tall man," since in the former case an open transition before "all" affects the quality of the /t/ to be aspirated differently from the /t/ in the latter phrase where it is aspirated after the juncture and stress, making the /t/ a more clearly aspirated sound. Or we can observe a longer diphthong in the pronunciation of "sly/ness" than in "minus," caused by the longer pause used in the former case. Thus, accent affects juncture, and juncture affects accent and phonetic changes.[39]

3. Terminal Junctures--There are three types of terminal junctures in English:[40]

   a) Terminal falling--a maximum degree of slowing down at the conclusion of the sentence, with accompanying drop in pitch, although not down to the next pitch level, with the slowing down occurring in the final syllables:

      He decorated the girl with the flowers↓

   b) Terminal rising--an intermediate degree of slowing down, but with a rise in pitch at the conclusion to indicate a question:

      He decorated the girl with the flowers??↑

   c) Terminal level--a brief pause within the sentence which may assist in understanding the meaning more

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[39] Ibid., p. 252.

[40] Stockwell and Bowen, The Sounds of English and Spanish, p. 251.

clearly:

He decorated / the girl with the flowers (the decoration is not the flowers but added);

He decorated the girl / with the flowers (the decoration given is the flowers).

In the two examples of terminal rising, the ambiguity of meaning presented in the first cases of terminal falling and rising has been eliminated.

We can see that the absence or presence of juncture results in minimal contrast between similar groups of phonemes and therefore belongs with the suprasegmental phonemes of English.

What is foreign accent?

According to Trager, foreign accent means that the "goal of learning the new language has not been achieved completely."[41] The learner is substituting sounds from his native tongue for American English patterns. A great deal of foreign accent lies in the pronunciation of phonemes. If control of certain phonemes that accompany the vowels and consonants, such as stress (force in articulation), intonation (speech melody), and juncture (pause), are not acquired, they can cause a noticeable foreign accent. These have been regarded as non-basic matters for concern, since they are presumed as being beyond isolation and practice as such. However, they are in fact an integral part of the stream of American

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[41]Trager and Smith, An Outline of English Structure, p. 44.

English,[42] and should be addressed by a special effort, as this study intends to do.

Reasons and Outcomes of Foreign Accent

Among the numerous sources for accentation difficulties are:

1. Substitution of certain foreign phonemes to replace American ones which do not exist in the student's native tongue (e.g. the Chinese tendency to replace the American R with an L-type sound).

2. Substitution of native phonemes not found in American English may cause additional sounds before or after consonants, e.g. Spanish students will say eschool or espanish because of the peculiarities of their native language (no s sound attached to a consonant at the start of a word).

3. Lack of distinction between English vowels (when they do not exist in the native language), e.g. confusion of sounds like sit and seat, fit and feet, etc., because the long e is absent in Spanish and the new sound runs out of control.

4. Lack of Aspiration--This results in an unclear accent and misunderstanding, e.g. without aspiration, ten might be taken as den, or pie as bye, etc.

5. Lack of Voicing--This will cause another type of foreignism, e.g. five being pronounced as fife, or bag as back, etc.

6. Improper technique for holding on to syllables or

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[42]Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers, p. 13.

consonants causes a rush of syllables, and difficulty in being comprehended.

7. The mispronunciation of diphthongs as pure vowels which makes words like soap sound like sup, or road is heard as rud, etc.

8. American English has the characteristic of unstressing vowels, causing them to become de-emphasized, e.g. (ɹˌIˌʊ ) become (əˌiˌʊ), (əˈɛɹ) instead of (eˈɛɹ).

9. Foreigners often have to be trained to make pauses between words when they lack them in their native tongue, e.g. Italian students run words together, caused by Italian influence.

10. Problems with intonation brought about by peculiarities in the native tongue, where certain sing-song patterns are part of the language, e.g. Spanish and Hungarian.

As a general summary of the above, it may be said that most causes of foreign accent stem from unaccostomed streams and patterns of speech which American English uses but with which the foreigner is entirely unaccustomed and has difficulty in adjustment. (See Appendix A.)

Learning Procedures

The basic goal of the student is to learn how to detect and imitate certain completely new sounds, and to modify his manner of making most of the other sounds which are already familiar to him. Towards accomplishing this goal of proper pronunciation, many approaches should be combined and utilized effectively:

1. the audio-visual approach, which emphasizes the training of the ear and the imitation of new and adjusted sounds.[43]

2. the articulatory approach, which emphasizes scientific explanations to the student about phonetics, descriptions, and diagrams of the articulators, etc., so that students learn the scientific basis behind what they are mastering.[44]

3. the syntactic approach, emphasizing the understanding of words, so that there is developed an association between sounds and meanings at all times.[45]

4. the contrastive analysis approach, in which the phonemes in the studen's language and those in American English are analyzed and compared. This helps to predict the student's pronunciation difficulties, and to select the drills which are proper and appropriate for the specific problems.

5. the Theatrical approach--to imitate the style of actors and actresses, who must learn many dialects and accents in their work. They use emotions, musical notes, and exaggeration to produce the necessary effects. The same method should be used with students. This enlivens the occasionally monotonous drills which are essential to correct pronunciation, and sometimes removes some inhibitions which are preventing

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[43]J. J. Catford and David B. Pison, "Auditory vs. Articulatory Training in Exotic Sounds," Modern Language Journal, 7(November 1970): 477.

[44]Richard R. Lee, L. McCane, and L. Patton, "Psychological Responses to Different Modes of Feedback in Pronunciation Training," Tesol Quarterly, 4:2 (June 1970): 117.

[45]Ronald Wardhaugh, "An Evaluative Comparison of Present Methods for Teaching English Phonology," Tesol Quarterly 4:1(March 1970): 63.

a more perfect pronunciation.[46]

6. the silent way approach--associates the phoneme with the sign and color on the Fidel. The student does most of the active work necessary for the correct production of the phoneme.[47]

The Use of Games

The idea of using games as part of adult language teaching no longer meets with disapproval. It is recognized today that, properly planned and conducted, games can assist in producing very positive results. Games help in the acquisition of the target language by distracting the students from their normal nervousness and self-consciousness. They put students in a friendly competitive atmosphere, in which there is a drive and motivation to outdo others, to improve generally, as well as to cooperate with one's classmates through teamwork. Games create some variety, fun, and excitement, out of the otherwise burdensome task of drilling and repetition.

Games and contests to develop better pronunciation or vocabulary should be held regularly, but not for overly long periods of time. Usually, the best time for a game is near the end of a session, where it can often serve as a final and enjoyable way of reviewing the day's work. Some

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[46]Lewis Herman and Margaret Shalet Herman, American Dialects: A Manual for Actors, Directors, and Writers (New York: Theatre Art Books, 1959).

[47]Caleb Gattegno, The Common Sense of Teaching Foreign Language (New York: Educational Solutions, 1976), p. 10.

games reviewed in this study are by nature suitable to a longer session, as a means of reviewing a larger chunk of material. The teacher should be on guard not to make the games too difficult, for a major goal of these games is to serve as a reward for attaining the class goal by affording students the pleasure of winning points for their knowledge. It is therefore better to have an easier game with high scores for both teams than a difficult one with low score results.

The creative teacher will find that the games in this report are open to the development of many more variations than those given. With proper manipulation almost any particular purpose or goal can be helped along with an appropriate game.

# CHAPTER IV

## ESL EXERCISES AND DRILLS

### (For the Phoneme θ, Including Stress, Intonation, and Juncture)

### Introduction

In this chapter, a model will be presented for the thorough study of the phoneme θ in nine daily lessons, each one about twenty minutes in duration. Any other phoneme can be studied in the same fashion, using word lists from any of the available texts in the field.

Ear training is the first step in learning a language, or its specific sounds.[1] A sound must be heard distinctly and identified, preferably as found in whole words. After the sound is perceived when placed at the start of the word, training can include recognition and discrimination of the sound in medial and final positions within a word.[2]

Consonantal sounds are most easily perceived when followed or preceded by a vowel. Otherwise, they tend to fuse and blend with the accompanying consonant. Hence,

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[1]Kenneth Croft, English Pronunciation Manual for Teachers (New York: Collier McMillan, 1968), p. 7.

[2]Betty Emett, Listening for Speech Sounds or Phonemes, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Company, 1950), p. 15.

blended speech sounds should be presented last.

Finally, the best method is a combination of different approaches utilizing as many senses and faculties of the students as possible.

The Study of the Phoneme /θ/

First Lesson (A)

1. Visual Approach--with ear training
   a) Show pictures of items beginning with /θ/ phoneme, e.g. thumb, theatre, thirteen, thief, thimble--pronounce each one carefully and correctly.
   b) Ask students if they hear and can distinguish the /θ/ sound. Repeat the words, accompanying each with the matching picture.
   c) Write all the words used on the board to show spelling of /θ/ phoneme.
   d) It is advisable to show students the IPA symbol /θ/ at this time, since they will eventually be exposed to the other sound for th (/ð/), as in "the."
2. Audio-lingual Approach--more ear training
   Students prepare on paper for ten short responses, numbered one to ten. The teacher reads a prepared list of ten words containing /θ/ either at the beginning (B), middle (M), or the end (E) of the word. As it is read slowly and distinctly, students record B, M, or E, for each numbered word. The answers can then be given and the students rate

themselves. If students feel confident, they may give their answers first aloud. Students who had errors should be given the opportunity to hear the words again, from the teacher or by tape.

3. Syntactic Approach

   a) The teacher repeats the same ten words, explaining each by use of synonyms, antonyms, or clear explanations.

   b) The words are written on the board, with stress signs noted correctly. The teacher gives definitions again, and students spot the matching word.

   c) Students who had trouble hearing the /θ/ sound, should record the list for further home study. They should find a native speaker to read the list for them again so that they can try again to record B, M, or E.

Second Lesson (B)

1. Review--The teacher pronounces the ten words and gets definitions from the students. As each word is pronounced, students say B, M, or E.

2. Sentences with /θ/ words are pronounced, and students record the number of words with this phoneme in each sentence. Correct stress, intonation, and juncture should be used by the teacher:

   a) Let's thank him for our tickets for the theatre.

   b) Thick and thin mean opposite things.

   c) Does the month of June have thirty days or thirty one?

d) I thought we would go south, not north.

e) I will celebrate my birthday on Thursday at three o'clock.

3. Syntactic approach may be used at this point, to be sure students understand the words in the context of the sentences. Students who missed some answers in the previous exercise should hear them again in the same sentences.

   The teacher should write out the /θ/ words in these sentences on the board to re-emphasize spelling and correct intonation and stress.

4. Contrastive Analysis

   The teacher should be aware of the students' native tongue and be prepared for the sound replacements they may use for /θ/. In the case of this phoneme, the replacements will be either /t/, /s/, or /f/. This offers an excellent basis for preparation of instructional material to follow-up the early ear training procedure, e.g. sound discrimination in minimal pairs, as follows:

   The teacher first prepares the class to use the letter T, when they hear the target sound (/θ/), or R, when they hear the replacement sounds. He then reads from a list of words with /θ/ and replacement sounds in random order, and for each one students record either T or R. For example, thank--tank--thin--tin--thought--sought--thick--sick--thought--fought--etc.

Students who made errors should check to discover which is their individual replacement confusion. They may then be grouped with others who have the same replacement problem. The words can then be read again to see if errors are being corrected. Students who still have trouble confusing /θ/ with their particular replacement, should take the list home for private review with the help of a native speaker. The sooner students identify the difference between the target sound and their replacement, the more effectively they can master the ability to discriminate between them in hearing and in their own pronunciation eventually.

Third Lesson (C)

1. Review--Pronounce target words and replacements from words used the day before. Review the meanings of the words. Play Password
2. Continue ear training--Pronounce sentences with new words containing /θ/ phoneme and replacement sounds found at the end of the word, e.g. for /θ/ and /t/:
   a) I think it's thin.
      I think it's tin.
   b) Did you get a bath?
      Did you get a bat?
   c) That's a good team.
      That's a good theme.

for /θ/ and /f/:

a) Is this thread?

   Is this Fred?

b) I know why you fought.

   I know why you thought.

c) It's a nice wreath.

   It's a nice reef.

for /θ/ and /s/:

a) Can he really think?

   Can he really sink?

b) That's my mouth.

   That's my mouse.

c) Show me the path.

   Show me the pass.[3]

The teacher should have a large number of such sentences for drilling. With the class potentially divided into three groups (three types of replacement), each group hears the appropriate set for their problem, with sentences in random order, and they record (T) for target, or (R) for replacement, for each sentence. While the teacher is busy with one group, the others listen to tape.

The teacher may now review all three types by writing samples on the board and reading them aloud, with proper stress, intonation, and juncture. Students

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[3]Morton J. Gordon, Speech Improvement (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1974).

need more drill should take copies of the sentences home to drill further with the help of native speakers.

Fourth Lesson (D)

1. Review--Play Bingo (Game A3, p. 60).
2. Up to this point, basic work has been in hearing the teacher. With this lesson, the second phase begins, where oral practice by students is emphasized. Review--Teacher re-reads samples of lesson three, sentences with /θ/ and the three replacement sounds mingled together to test discrimination.
3. Articulatory Approach
   a) Teacher explains to students HOW the phoneme /θ/ is pronounced. (Since /θ/ is a voiceless fricative), the teacher explains:
      1) Put tongue lightly between teeth and let air pass over the top of the tongue.
      2) Hold a mirror in front of your mouth to see your vocal production.
      3) Hold piece of paper in front of your mouth to show air passing out.
      4) All students practice the /θ/ sound, with the above three steps.
   b) Teacher now explains how the replacement sounds are pronounced, so that students can recognize the differences:
      1) The voiceless fricative /f/ is produced by forcing air out, with the lower part of the

upper teeth pressed against the lower lip.

2) The voiceless fricative /s/ is produced with the upper and lower teeth placed almost together, the tongue pulled flat behind the teeth, with air escaping between the teeth to make a hissing sound.

3) The voiceless stop /t/ is produced with the tongue tip touching the gum ridge, as the tongue is dropped and the breath flows out.

As the students are made aware of these facts and observe them through mirrors, their attention is focused on the special way to pronounce each phoneme, and improvements are the result. (See Appendix.)

4. Audio-oral Approach

a) Students first pronounce the isolated sound /θ/ and replacements, repeating after the teacher: θ s θ s θ s θ t θ t θ t θ f θ f, three ways:

1) choral style

2) small groups of students

3) individually

(In future references to these three steps, it will be called 1-2-3 oral drill.)

b) Teacher pronounces clearly all /θ/ words where it appears initially, in middle of the word, and in final position. Students repeat word by word, at first choral style, then in groups, finally individually.

c) Teacher shows pictures of objects containing /θ/ phoneme, and class identifies them in 1-2-3 oral drill.

d) Teacher pantomimes the desired word and class responds in 1-2-3 drill.

e) Teacher pronounces words with /θ/ sound and replacements (from lesson two) and class repeats in 1-2-3 oral drill.

f) Teacher pronounces phrases with target and replacements (from lesson three) and class reviews in 1-2-3 oral drill.

Fifth Lesson (E)

1. Review--Show some pictures, and students identify with words that contain target and replacements. Write phrases on the board which student reads and pronounces correctly, taking turns.
2. Audio-oral Approach (continuation and extension)

g) Pronounce from a prepared list words which contain both the /θ/ sound and a replacement, being careful with stress and intonation, and offer the definition of each as given. For example:

| t θ | s θ | f θ |
|---|---|---|
| tooth | south | fourth |
| teeth | smith | fifth |
| twentieth | southwest | fiftieth |
| toothpaste | something | filthy[4] |

[4]Gordon, Speech Improvement.

h) Teacher reads from list of new words containing target clusters, and gives meanings:

| θ r | l θ | θ | n θ |
|---|---|---|---|
| thrill | health | strength | seventh |
| throw | wealth | length | ninth |
| three | filth | | eleventh[5] |

Above words may be studied by audio-oral methods in lesson four.

Slower students should be given lists to work on at home, with the help of native speakers, or very talented students who have mastered target.

Sixth Lesson (F)

1. Review--Vocabulary from lesson five reviewed, as teacher gives meaning and students give the word. Teacher acts out words in phrases, and students call out description of action.
2. Theatrical Approach

   Ask students to exaggerate /θ/ pronunciation by the following:

   a) acting as if they have a lisp
   b) sticking out their tongues as if in anger (Hispanic students need special encouragement since this act is somewhat vulgar to them).
3. Drilling stress, intonation, and juncture

   Teacher introduces new phrases with /θ/ phoneme, emphasis on stress, intonation, and internal juncture.

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[5]Gordon, Speech Improvement.

a) a thousand thirsty panthers

b) a mouthful of turkey on Thanksgiving

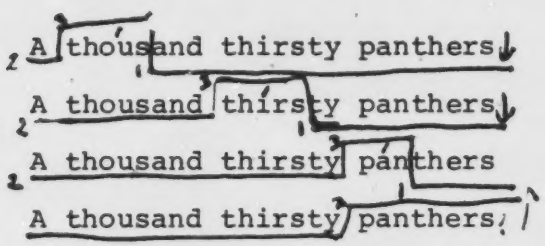
c) a birthday party on Thursday at three o'clock

d) a child's thin thumb

Teacher writes phrases on the board, and students take turns reading aloud, to each other, and to record on tape. Teacher should find opportunities to help slow students while class forms small groups.

Seventh Lesson (G)

1. Review--yesterday's phrases read by students with proper stress, etc.
2. Stress Varieties
   a) Teacher shows how phrases may be stressed and intoned different ways:




   Students repeat after teacher in a 1-2-3 oral drill.

   b) Teacher writes variations on the board with symbols to show visually the various manners of stress, intonation, and internal juncture.

   c) Volunteers read the phrase the teacher points to on the board.

Eighth Lesson (H)

1. Review--variations of lesson seven.
   Play the game of "Odd Man Out" (Game A2, p. 59).
2. Final Drill--Beginning Conversation
   a) Teacher places target word in a structured conversation starter, and students repeat starter and complete a thought, for example:
      1) Are you through eating . . .
      2) Did you thank him for the . . . etc.
   b) Students are handed vocabulary words previously studied and must create sentences with them. All words contain /θ/ phoneme.
   c) Students are tape-recorded as they make the sentences or finish conversation starters. They then listen to their voices, and catch any errors.

Ninth Lesson (I)

1. Review--Read a paragraph with target words interspersed, and students count the words, and try to write down as many as possible.
   Class reads paragraph later.
   Dictate a paragraph, and volunteers write on the board one sentence each.
2. Silent Way--Teacher does not pronounce anything, but uses Fidels to construct sentences, pointing to words, which students read. Correct stress and rhythm is shown with a pointer. Student who is correct is asked to repeat for the benefit of those who erred;

they then have the opportunity to make the proper correction. Students may be called to construct their own sentences and phrases by use of the Fidels.

Conclusion

After a multifaceted presentation like the above model, students should acquire the desired ability and minimize or entirely eliminate the use of replacement sounds, making the oral language easily intelligible. By using this method with various difficult phonemes, foreigners can be brought to a high level of functional English, of which they will be proud, until they attain their maximum ability in English communication.

## CHAPTER V

## GAMES AND DEVICES IN ESL INSTRUCTION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF AMERICAN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

A. Pronunciation Games by Listening, Sound Discrimination, and Repetition

1. Building Basic English--by use of the Bell and Howell Audio-Visual Program, Set B, Phonics Series. (These cards are divided into different sets, each of which contains many words with a common difficult sound, e.g. us, bus, bud, sum, hug, etc.)

a) Each team member goes to the machine for his word, hears it from the recording, and repeats it. If he succeeds in giving exact pronunciation on his first attempt, he gains the maximum score for his team. If he must repeat himself, his score continues to diminish until he succeeds.

b) Instead of teams, each student is an individual contestant. Each, in turn, is clocked by a stop watch through one complete set of cards, which he must pronounce aloud correctly. The student who succeeds at the fastest speed is the winner. A variation of this type of competition is for the student to repeat his set three times with

the goal of speeding up each time.

c) The teacher records sentences to reinforce rhythm through student repetition, e.g. "The teacher told us a story--the teacher told us an interesting story--the teacher told us a very interesting story--the teacher told the class a very interesting story." The aim of the game is for the student to say the longest version in the same speed used for the shortest one. With a stop watch, the additional time used by the student for the longest version over the shortest is recorded as his negative score. All the negative scores of the team are added up, compared to the other team (same number of members), and the lower number is the winning team. Individual members of each team may be paired against each other for a variation that allows for one-to-one competition.

2. Odd Man Out (in four variations)

a) (This may be a team game with scores adding up, or a general class competition with losers eliminated until a winner remains.) The teacher pronounces aloud three words, of which two are the same and the middle one is a small variation, e.g. leaf, leave, leaf, or the variation occurs first or last, at random. The contestant must identify the "odd man" by calling its number in the sequence.

b) 1) The above game may be used for sentences, the "odd" sentence containing only one change, e.g. We must live today, we must leave today, we must live today.

2) A variation of the above is to change one sentence only in its stress, which the contestant must identify, e.g. He is going to the bank, he is going to the bank, he is going to bank.

c) The teacher uses three-word sets, with the goal of spotting the one that does not rhyme, e.g. ran, ten, pen, with scoring either on a team or on an individual basis.

d) A final variation requires that the contestant note which of three sentences was given a different intonation, e.g. The thief wasn't there? The thief wasn't there? The thief wasn't there. For students already experienced with intonation varieties, a more difficult exercise is possible: Three different sentences are recited by the teacher, all of the same length, with one varying from the other two in stress style. The student must adjust the "odd" one to match the other two, e.g. John doesn't sing, he can't come, I won't eat (corrected to I won't eat).

3. Bingo

Cards similar to the Bingo game are distributed, but

instead of numbers the spaces contain words which the class has been studying. No two cards are identical. The teacher calls out the words from her list. Victory is attained like in any Bingo game, except that the winner must repeat the winning words aloud, correctly. By using minimal pairs (ship--sheep, etc.), the students will have to listen closely and really concentrate on exact sound discrimination as they play to win.

4. The Dating Game

Students should first be assigned to watch the game for several weeks on TV before its use in class. Preparation is also necessary in advance planning for questions to be used in the actual game.

Five people are needed to play a round of this game: three students of one sex, a blindfolded student of the opposite sex, and an MC. It is designed for single people except that this is irrelevant as far as the MC is concerned. The blindfolded student asks the planned questions of the three contestants, finally choosing a date on the basis of the answers given. Students are encouraged to speak clearly and correctly, and words with pronunciation difficulties are generously included in the prepared questions. Rhythm and intonation patterns are reinforced by the questions and answers.

5. Hollywood Squares

This game is also based on the well-known TV game, which should first be viewed by the students until they are familiar with it. A complete round requires twelve students--two contestants, nine students representing the nine squares of a tic-tac-toe board, and an MC. A tic-tac-toe design is drawn on the blackboard. The MC directs questions in English, pronunciation, or vocabulary (prepared in advance by the teacher) at the nine students in rotation. As they answer, the two contestants take turns in stating agreement or disagreement with the given responses. When the contestant is correct, he adds his circle, or square, into any desired space, and if incorrect, he loses his turn. The game continues until one contestant scores tic-tac-toe in the usual way. Within two or three rounds, all class members have the opportunity to participate.

6. Scrabble

Each student receives a set of some letters made on small cardboard squares, with no two sets identical. The teacher reads words which students attempt to spell from their collection of letters. This is both a spelling review and a drill in hearing words correctly. Points are gained for each word spelled out correctly, and in the case of two students having the needed letters, the first one to raise the hand

wins the points. The imaginative teacher will be able to prepare sets with an eye towards the special sounds that had been studied that week and which require reinforcement most, by generously loading sets with an abundance of the necessary vowels or consonants so that any word will surely have a winner or two.

7. Word Hunt

   a) This game is based on the widely used children's paper and pencil game of the same name. Students receive identical large sheets with individual letters recorded in lines neatly and covering the entire page. Hidden within the scheme are many words spelled out correctly across, down, or diagonally, chosen from those studied in class work. The teacher may call out words individually and grant points to the first student who finds each one, or may call out three or four words at once, and award points to the one who finds all of them first. The first method would be best for less advanced students, or for first introducing the game, and the other method for experienced students, or for a change of pace.

   b) To get fuller participation from all students, including those who are behind in work, the teacher may pair faster with slower students and thus make paired teams for this game. This can give the

slower student encouragement and some more confidence.

8. Catch the Error[1]

The teacher tape records a series of statements or a story with many pronunciation errors. It may be done by the teacher alone, or by getting a foreign student, to whom the errors come naturally, to participate. The class listens silently and records on paper each error they catch. The student who hears and records the most errors is the winner. An interesting variation is to develop more sophisticated scoring methods, e.g. divide the class into units of three or four students, and each team counts up the total number of different errors they found (repeats do not count). A further refinement would be to give a special bonus to any team which found a real error not noticed by any other team.

9. First Letters (for younger children)

All children have small cards in sets, on each of which is printed a different consonant or consonant set, e.g. ch, sh, tr, etc. As the teacher pronounced a word, e.g. chicken, the first child who holds up his "ch" card gets the chance to pronounce the word correctly and score a point. The teacher may also give a point to the second child in order, if he can

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[1]Burlington Willes, Games and Ideas for Teaching Spanish (Lafayette, California: Lear Siegler Inc., Fearon Publishers, 1967), p. 28.

give another word beginning with the same sound. For older children, points may be given for a somewhat more difficult task (e.g. two other words beginning with the same sound, etc.)

10. The Listening Game (older students)

The teacher selects in advance a certain sound (or two) for class concentration, e.g. "tr" (and "str"). Then she reads a short story or anecdote aloud in which the sound(s) occurs several times. Students record each word they discern in which the needed sound appears. Winners may be individuals with highest score, or the group with the highest combined score, when organized as a team game.

Another way to score is to allow for achievement of slower students by recording each one's accomplishment after a first set. The next day, the same record is played and points are given only for the number each student was able to ADD to his original number. This method will encourage those who could never hope to win in direct competition to do their best and gain recognition.

11. Password

The class divides into two groups each choosing a representative, who are given a word chosen from recent study. The object is to relay the meaning of the word by synonyms, antonyms, pantomimes, or any explanation, until a team member guesses the word.

The representatives take turns (first round, second round . . .) and the winning team gains points depending on when they were able to identify it.

12. Match Game

This is an audience participation game, involving two players. The teacher reads a sentence aloud minus the final word (e.g. "When I go shopping I take along my . . ."), which all audience members as well as the two players complete silently by writing their choices on paper. The winning player is the one whose word was chosen by the larger number of participants in the audience.

13. Concentration

The object in this game is to accumulate pairs. The teacher places ten or more paired cards face down on the table, e.g. synonyms, antonyms, minimal pairs, etc. Students are informed of what the pairs are so that they know what they are looking for. Each contestant in turn lifts and examines two cards hoping to make a match. If he succeeds he gets another turn, and keeps the matched pair at his place. If he fails, he turns them over once again and passes to the next player. When all cards have been matched, the winner is the one with the most accumulated cards. The teacher should demand proper pronunciation of the pair before allowing the credit for the match.

14. What's My Line?

Four student panelists from one team try to guess the occupation of an opposition member. The more questions required, the less points earned for the correct answer. Proper pronunciation of the occupation is required of the panelists. The teacher should perhaps pre-select students with interesting occupations and/or those which are more interesting to pronounce.

15. Beat the Clock

Students receive, individually, a list of words to pronounce correctly in an allotted time. In each round, a team member is competing against an opposition member using the identical list. The one who covers more words within the time period wins that round for his team. The teacher should try to match faster players with the other team's faster students, and slow with slow, so that everyone has a reasonable chance to succeed and win points.

16. Family Feud

This game is based on the TV game, and needs more-than-average preparation. Class members are asked on Monday to conduct a survey to answer three questions of the teacher by Friday. For example, in studying the /sh/ sound, the questions might be: Record five popular words beginning with /sh/--Record five popular words ending in /sh/--Record five

popular words describing your daily activities containing the /sh/ sound anywhere it appears. The teacher collects all answer sheets and over the weekend prepares a list of the most popular answers and the score of each, e.g. for item one it might be: show--30; shop--28; she--25; etc. The teacher comes prepared with the results, but nobody is permitted to see them. The class is divided into two families. One member from each team starts the game by suggesting a word beginning with /sh/. If one of them chose a word on the teacher's master list of the five (or six) most popular words and the other did not, his team gets to bat first. If neither did, there is a second guess. If both did, the one with the higher popularity score wins. At this point, each member of the leading family gets a chance to guess another word on the popularity list held by the teacher. Each time a member of the family uses a word not on the list, it is a strike. If the family gets three strikes, the other family gets a single chance to suggest a word on the list. If they succeed, they gain all the points accumulated by the original leading team. (Throughout the guessing attempts, consultations between the family members is permitted.) If they fail, the original leading team keeps its points gained up to that point, and the second game begins based on item two. The second round is

identical to the first. When it is over it is possible that one family will have won both rounds. Nevertheless this does not guarantee ultimate victory, since in the final round all points are doubled! This keeps the excitement going to the very end of the game, when all points in the three rounds are tallied. In all three, points are based on total popularity vote from the survey, so that correctly guessing a word chosen by thirty people gives thirty points, and sixty points in the final round.

B. Pronunciation Games Through Visual Aids

1. Playing with Words (in three variations)

a) A set of specially grouped words on the blackboard, e.g. pot, port, part, pat, etc., each word individually numbered. With the class divided into two teams, the teacher pronounces a word on the list clearly. To win a point, a team member (taking turns in order) identifies the word by calling out its number, with the teams alternating in taking chances to score. The teacher should be prepared with a large number of such sets, so that they may be changed frequently during the game.

b) For consonant differentiation, the teacher records on the board several word sets in numbered lines, e.g.:

1) fin fought four

2) thin thought thaw

3) sin sought saw

4) tin taught tore, etc.

As in the first variation, the teacher reads one word, and the player calls out the number of the correct line in order to score. Eventually, students can be asked to prepare their own word lists for use in the games.

c) Auditory ability to hear stress and intonation can be practiced by this variation. A sentence is recorded on the board several times, but with different syllables underlined in each one, e.g.:

1) <u>You</u> will telephone me in the morning.

2) You <u>will</u> telephone me in the morning.

3) You will telephone <u>me</u> in the morning.

4) You will telephone me in the <u>morning</u>?

The teacher (or a chosen student) recites the sentence using one of the suggested stresses/intonations, and scoring is similar to the earlier variations.

2. Are You Saying It? (in two variations)

a) Paired words (e.g. hit--heat, cot--cut, etc.) are recorded on the board. The teacher points to one, and the contestant must read the pair correctly to score. With the class divided into two teams, a round ends when every student has had one turn. (It is up to the teacher to arrange that teams should be fairly balanced.)

b) Instead of paired words, the teacher places pictures of many objects on the flannel board, chosen from those under class study. The game is identical to the first one.

3. Did You Hear It? (in four variations)

a) A collection of many object-pictures on the flannel board, as well as actual objects around the room, may be utilized in this game. The teacher calls on each student, in turn, to point out an object, e.g. Show me a hat--show me a hut--etc., and the contestant points it out or goes up to it directly to gain points for the team.

b) The teacher points to the object and asks, "Is this a ship?" (it may be a sheep), and he must correctly answer "yes" or "no" to win points.

c) Students use paper and pen. The teacher issues instructions, e.g. Draw a hat (hut?), draw a cat (cot?), etc. Papers are collected after a series, with each correct sketch adding a point to the cumulative team score.

d) All students receive complete sets of pictures of the items (hat, hut, cat, cot, etc.). As the teacher calls out, "Show me a cat," everyone must hold up a card in the air for the teacher to see. The teacher totals the correct cards for each team to determine the winning side, and may also decide to subtract for each incorrect card in tallying.

4. Dart Game[2]

   Word cards and/or pictures of objects studied in previous lessons are spread over a dart board. Each student throws a dart and must properly pronounce the word or picture that he struck. Older students might be aseked to use it in a sentence.

5. I Spy (children's game)

   A student from each team stands aside as cards are distributed to all players, each containing a single word, with no duplicates. It is possible to give two such cards to each player. The two chosen contestants now face the class. All players lift high their one or two cards in the air making them clearly visible to the contestants. Teacher calls out "I spy a house," and the first contestant to spot that card wins the point.

6. Go Fishing[3]

   Depending on the ultimate educational goal of the teacher, fifty cards are prepared of matched pairs, e.g. minimal pairs (ship--sheep), present and past tenses of verbs, ordinal and cardinal numbers, words with synonyms, etc. For eight players, the dealer deals five cards to each player; the remainder forms the "fish pond" in the middle of the table. Players

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[2]Leslie Landin, One Hundred Blackboard Games (Belmont, California: Fearon Publishers, 1966), p. 2.

[3]Copyright 1977 Counseling-Learning Institute.

may immediately place face up any pair they have discovered in their hand directly in front of their own place, since these will be counted up later for their credit. Each player in turn may seek out a match to his single by asking any specific player he chooses for the card he needs ("Can you give me a ship?"), for which the response is either "No, I can't--go fishing" or "Here it is." If he has successfully made a match, he gets a second turn to continue; if not, he fishes another card from the pond and his turn has ended. The game ends when all cards have been matched, with the winner being the one with the most accumulated pairs. In this game, students have opportunities to pronounce and to hear the words they have been studying, with other students helping to correct any errors they detect. With a little imagination, this game can be given endless variations for various educational goals.

7. Old Maid

This card game can be played by as many as ten players, but smaller groups are preferable. A set of cards is prepared by the teacher with pairs of words (full--fool; pull--pool; etc.), a picture card with the matching definition card, or any other type of set combination depending on what the goal of the instruction is. With the set of forty cards (twenty pairs) comes the old maid card, and the procedure is

similar to the standard game. When a student gets a matched pair it is placed face up on the table and the student reads off the pair aloud, until the game ends with one student holding the Old Maid.

8. Pantomime (Act and Tell)

   Each student receives a card with instructions to act out something (e.g. remove your glasses, snap your fingers, hum a song, etc.). As each one does the task in turn, others are called upon to describe what was done (she removed her glasses, he snapped his fingers, etc.) in sentences correctly pronounced with proper form. By breaking the class into two groups, this can become a competitive game with a convenient scoring system which the teacher may adopt, with one team seeking to correctly identify the pantomime of the other team on the first try, etc.

9. The Donkey's Tail (for young children)[4]

   A large donkey is drawn on the board with sections of the body marked off with boundary lines. Within each section, different word-starting sounds are recorded, e.g. cr, dr, sh, etc. A blindfolded student tries to pin the tail on the donkey, but when he fails (usually), he must pronounce correctly a word beginning with the sound he pinned. An additional starting sound is recorded outside the body in the event that

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[4]Landin, One Hundred Blackboard Games, p. 3.

a contestant misses the body entirely. The reward for a correctly pronounced word is the opportunity to choose the next contestant.

10. Blackboard Auto Race (for young children)[5]
Two students are blindfolded or sent out of the room. The teacher records a series of word-starting sounds on the board twice, identical but moving in opposite directions (ch sh st dr gr str bl / bl str gr dr st sh ch). The competing students place a small model auto, or cardboard substitute, at the two ends and drive towards each other by pronouncing correctly a word for each given opening. The one who arrives at the center first wins.

11. Lip Reading[6]
A contestant stands facing the class, while the teacher has recorded several new words on the board behind her back, from those recently studied. Another student points at one of the words, and the whole class pronounces it silently, with the lips only. If the contestant guesses the word, he chooses the next contestant.

12. Baseball (for weekly vocabulary review)[7]
New words studied during the week are recorded on the blackboard before classtime. Alternating members

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[5]Ibid., p. 5.

[6]Ibid., p. 6.

[7]Ibid., p. 9.

of one team read aloud, in order, scoring a single for each correct word, but an out for each error, until there are three outs. A minimum of four correct words will therefore be needed to actually score in any inning. The teams come to bat alternately as in real baseball. The teacher may create variations in which for additional accomplishments one may score a double or triple.

C. Pronunciation Games with Syntactic Approach

1. Can You Hear Me? (three variations)

a) The teacher asks a question, in which the key word is one with which there is a hearing problem, e.g. "Do all people wear a hut on their heads?" The player must answer in a full sentence, e.g. "No, nobody ever wears a hut" or to that effect to win the point for the team. Each student takes one turn, with the class divided into two teams.

b) The teacher requests a simple definition, e.g. "What is a cot good for?" and each team member takes one turn in responding in a full sentence with the word included, properly pronounced.

c) The teacher gives directions which the contestants must act out, e.g. "Show me a heel" (hill?). Students who hear the word incorrectly will do the wrong act and not gain a point for the team.

2. Telegraph

This very interesting game often produces amazing

results. The teacher whispers the same message to two opposition members. The message is then carried from member to member, within the two teams respectively. When each team reaches its last member, he rises and pronounces the message aloud, one after the other or simultaneously. The team which remained closest to the original wins. It is very unusual for the message to remain as given, especially with a large group of students. The message may be lengthened or shortened, simplified or complicated, depending on the age and experience of the students.

# CHAPTER VI

## CONCLUSION

This study has been concerned primarily with the improvement of American English pronunciation among foreign students. While all normal people naturally become expert in pronouncing their native tongue, the acquisition of a foreign language is a special skill. The main reason foreigners fail to become more expert in this pursuit is that they do not grasp the underlying problems of learning good pronunciation, and are usually not properly trained. Most teachers of ESL tend to neglect the aspect of pronunciation while emphasizing vocabulary, grammar, and reading-writing. In this study, the need for teachers to devote significant periods of time on a regular basis for pronunciation improvement has been highlighted. To properly qualify for this task, teachers must have the proper attitude, knowledge, and techniques, and substantial material to broaden teachers' knowledge and techniques has been provided herein.

Various approaches and techniques have been blended together in the drills presented, based on the theory that the more varied the kinds of association a learner has with any material, the more likely it is that he will succeed in mastering it. The varied approaches used in this study will assure that students will proceed effectively through the

three necessary steps for acquiring good pronunciation: 1) hearing the sounds; 2) differentiating one from another; and 3) producing them appropriately. As Mitchell states, "Learning to speak a language depends primarily on an essentially simple process, that of hearing, and imitating, words and sentences in the language. Practice, which is the repetition of the hearing-imitating process, is the heart of language learning."[1]

Since many adult learners of ESL are past the age of producing by mere imitation, this study has provided explanations, devices, and methodology necessary for such production. It makes use of contrastive analysis to predict the probable errors made by students of certain backgrounds or cultures, helping the teacher to create the special drills needed to overcome the particular problems of each student. The syntactic approach has also been emphasized, since it is important that students first understand the utterances which they are practicing.

This study has provided useful information for teachers and students regarding the use of the tongue and other speech organs to help students acquire new habits and motions for better sound production. Since an important part of proper American English pronunciation is the correct production of suprasegmental phenomena which accompany the vowels and consonants, they have been described and used herein.

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[1]Elizabeth Gilligan Mitchell, Beginning American English (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1965), p. 1.

It is unfortunate that they are typically ignored in the usual ESL classes in most schools, but should in fact be incorporated in the instruction from the very beginning. As Mitchell states, "Good intonation is more important than good pronunciation."[2] Proper syllabification, which accompanies these phenomena, leads to the right coloring of vowel sounds, which are part of American English pronunciation and rhythm.

The drills in this study challenge the student to use his powers of thinking and the ability to analyze and experiment with the language. They help eventually to give him a feel for English, and a sense of ease and accomplishment. The approaches used create positive motivation for involvement in the learning process. The games suggested herein are powerful tools to create exuberance and excitement in ESL classes and help speed up the process of acquiring good pronunciation. The basic approach of this study has been to develop a method in keeping with the maxim, "Focus on information through pleasant and successful experiences facilitates learning."[3]

Suggestions for Further Studies

The model used in this study was a nine-lesson plan for teaching the /θ/ phoneme. It would be most useful, and a great help to teachers, to produce a volume of similar

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[2]Ibid., p. 10.

[3]Pat Hopson King, Games that Teach (Encino, California: International Center for Educational Development, 1971), p. iii.

lessons for all difficult American English phonemes. Such a volume, presented with a well-chosen list of examples for teacher use, would lift the burden from each teacher to spend many hours in preparatory work, and make these drills more usable and useful. If such a venture were undertaken and completed successfully, it is easily possible to conceive that attention to pronunciation might finally be paid in proportion to its importance in the curriculum for ESL teaching.

It is hoped that this study will help focus on the neglected area of pronunciation instruction, and that its proper place in the ESL curriculum be promoted and fully recognized.

## SELECTED LIST OF SPECIAL PRONUNCIATION PROBLEMS
according to students' native language



V=Vowel(s)
C=Consonant(s)
-/-=Contrasts (between the phonemes on either side of the bar)

*All students*: Vowel drills; r, θ/ð; stress and intonation.
*Most students*: ŋ; final stops; s/z, t/d, w/v, y/j, š/č, l/r; initial and final clusters; polysyllables.
*Spanish-speaking students*: all the above; b/v, final m/n/ŋ.
*Asian students*: initial, medial and final l/r; l/r clusters (fl, fr, gl, gr, bl, br, etc.); final clusters, especially Cs, Cz, Ct, Cd.

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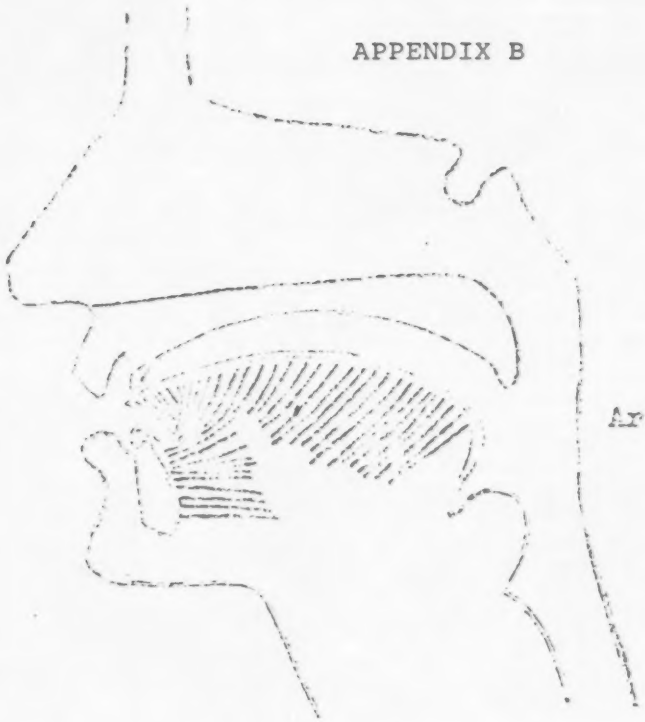
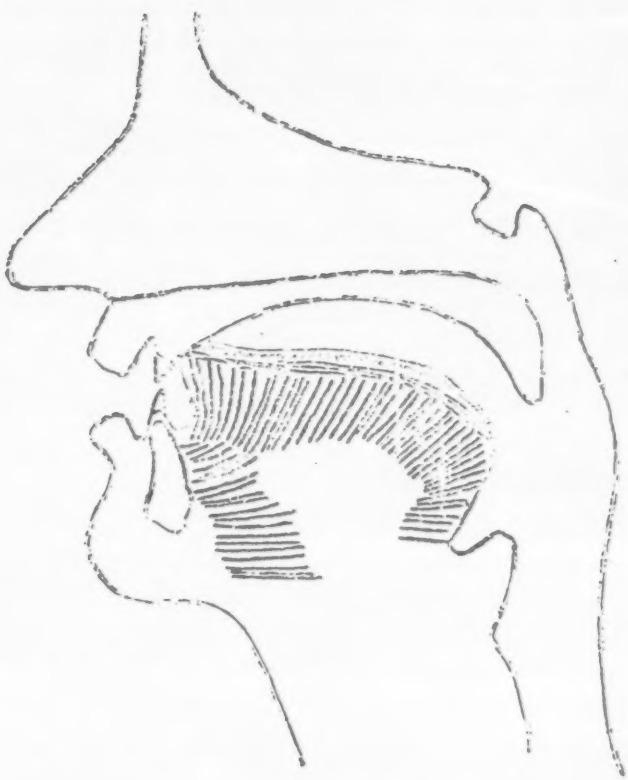
*Arabic*: ow, oy, i/e/æ, a/ə/u, i/iy, e/ey, u/uw; p, ŋ, š/j/ž, g/j; clusters.
*Burmese*: i/iy, e/ey, u/uw; final stops; f/v, l/r; final clusters.
*Chinese*: all V; b, d, g, v, θ, ð; all final C except n and ŋ; h/š, š/č, j/ž.
*French*: ə, oy, i/iy, e/ey, u/uw; h, θ, ð, s/t/θ, č/š, j/ž.
*German*: θ, ð; all voiced finals; p/b, t/θ, d/ð, s/z, w/v, j/y, č/š, n/ŋ, s clusters.
*Haitian*: same as French, plus final C; y/ž.
*Indonesian*: oy, i/iy, e/ey, u/uw; θ, ð, š, ž, f, v; final b, d, j, g, ð, z, ž; w/v; clusters.
*Iranian*: i/e/æ, a/ə, i/iy, e/ey, u/uw, ow/aw; medial ŋ; v/w, s/θ, θ/ð; s clusters; final clusters.
*Italian*: i/iy, u/uw; h, θ, ð, s/š; initial fl, pl, bl; final clusters; unstressed syllables; stress.
*Japanese*: all V; unstressed i, u; θ, ð, s/š, f/h, z/ž, t/ts, š/č, w/v, l/r; all clusters.
*Korean*: i/iy, e/ey, u/uw, oh/ow; all voiced sounds; θ, ð; medial p, t, č, k; p, t, č, k before nasals; final b, d, j, g and spirants; nasals after ð and r; l/r, ŋ/ŋg.
*Laotian*: same as for Thai, but not l/r.
*Polish*: ə, long V, diphthongs; θ, ð; w, l; ŋ/ŋg, final w/l; unstressed syllables.
*Portuguese*: h, n, ŋ; final l; final stops; č/j, all clusters; final unstressed syllables.
*Spanish*: e/ey, i/iy, u/uw, u/ə; final voiced C; b/v, y/j, s/z, s/θ, s/š/č, d; final m/n/ŋ; s clusters; final clusters.
*Thai*: ə, i/iy, e/ey, u/uw, oh/ow; θ, ð; final voiced stops; l/r, š/č, s/z, v/w, č/j, z/ž.
*Turkish*: all V; e; ŋ; k, g before e, i; final voiced C; w/v; initial and final clusters.
*Vietnamese*: i/e, ey, uw, e/æ: initial p; y, r, final voiced C: k, ŋ after u, o, w; š/ž.

(Taken from Trager, "Pronunciation Drills for Learners of English", Foreword, V-VI.)



Articulatory Position for [θ]



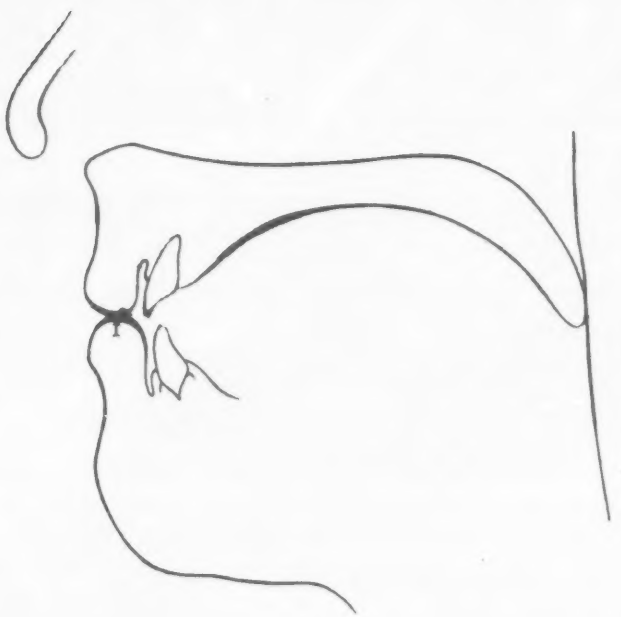
Articulatory Position for [t]

APPENDIX C

The position of the tongue for /s/.

(Figure taken from Bronstein, "The Pronunciation of American English", p. 88.)

# APPENDIX D



The articulators that act as obstructors to the breath stream to form the fricatives. / /: both lips; /f - v/: lip and teeth;
(Figure taken from Bronstein, "The Pronunciation of American English", p. 84.)

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